

Efforts To Balance the Budget

Q. Mr. President, you praised the Republicans for flexibility. Are you willing to forgo the tax cuts you sought yourself?

The President. Well, let me say, first of all, I've actually produced a budget that does give the tax cuts that I believe—that are much more limited than they had previously proposed and are sharply targeted toward education and childrearing. That's first. Secondly, I consider those education investments and the children's investments a part of advancing America's family and education agenda. But in terms of all the details of the budget, I think all of us have to be willing to show some flexibility. They have shown some flexibility here, and their recent

comments by the leaders were really quite forthcoming. And we all need to recognize that, and all of us need to be flexible as we go into these negotiations.

There are all kinds of things that each of us will care about more than other things. But I think that I have to say that on all these issues I have to show flexibility; they have to show flexibility. We'll put our heads together, and we'll come out with an agreement. And I think that if we do that it will be in the best interests of the American people.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. in the Residence at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia.

Statement on Legislation To Reauthorize the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation

March 18, 1997

Today my administration is transmitting to Congress legislation to reauthorize both the Export-Import Bank of the United States and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). I am also asking that my requests for these agencies and for the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (TDA) be fully funded.

These three specialized agencies play important complementary roles in helping U.S. firms compete for valued export markets. Never in our recent history have exports been more critical to American economic growth and to the creation of high-paying U.S. jobs. Other major trading countries rely heavily on government trade and finance agencies to help their companies compete in the world's fastest growing economies. Because of our efforts over the past 4 years, the United States has signed more than 200 new trade agreements and is once again

the world's leading exporter. We need Ex-Im Bank, OPIC, and TDA to help maintain that position and continue to create good jobs for our people.

The appropriations for these agencies are relatively modest, particularly compared to the benefits of increased export growth that ripple throughout the entire U.S. economy. Each of these programs delivers public benefits by expanding U.S. commercial opportunities abroad, helping meet competition from other countries, and broadening the base of U.S. export-oriented businesses. Each has taken steps to streamline its own operations and improve its coordination with other agencies. My administration stands ready to work with Congress on ideas for further improvements that will yield even greater benefits for the American economy.

Telephone Remarks to a National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse Dinner
March 18, 1997

The President. Hello, Joe. Can you hear me all right?

Joseph A. Califano, Jr. Yes, sir.

The President. Well, thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the applause. And I'd like to be there with you tonight, you know, but I'm not particularly mobile at this time. I want to congratulate all of you who have had anything to do with the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse on the fifth anniversary. Hillary and I are pleased to be the special honorary chairs for CASA's anniversary dinner. And I'm delighted to join you in paying tribute to Nancy Reagan, to Peter Lund, and to Sandy Weill as they're honored for extraordinary achievements in our common crusade against substance abuse.

All of you know very well that alcoholism, teen smoking, drug addiction, and other forms of substance abuse are claiming the lives of thousands of people every year and fueling crime, domestic violence, disease, and death. But because of the efforts of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse and so many other people throughout our country, we have reason to hope for a better future.

In just 5 short years, CASA has established itself as one of our Nation's premier institutions in the field of substance abuse. In communities all across our Nation, concerned individuals and groups from all parts of our society are coming together under the leadership of CASA to empower our people with the information and services they need to lead productive and drug-free lives.

I especially want to commend Joe Califano and the board of directors, the staff, and the special supporters of CASA for your vision and your leadership in this crusade to protect our families, our friends, our neighbors, and our future from the ravages of substance abuse. Your knowledge and professionalism and hard work will make our Nation stronger and our future brighter.

Our administration is taking forceful measures to help our citizens in this crucial endeavor. We're attacking the supply of illegal narcotics at its source, sending a strong message to our Nation's young people about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse to prevent it before it begins, including a \$175 million national antidrug media campaign directed toward our youth that's part of our budget proposal, and doing everything we can, finally, to have the right kind of law enforcement that focuses on prevention as well.

We want to be good partners with you. But everyone in America has to recognize the unique role that the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse has played in concentrating our attention and making us know that we have to keep working on this problem. And we cannot tolerate the trends of recent years in increased substance abuse among our young people. We're going to turn that around, and we're going to take our Nation where we need it to go, thanks in no small measure to your leadership.

I give you my best wishes for a memorable anniversary celebration tonight and, even more important, for continued success. And once again, let me personally thank Nancy Reagan and Peter Lund and Sandy Weill for all that they have done.

Thank you, Joe, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. from the Residence at the White House to dinner participants at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph A. Califano, Jr., president, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse; and former First Lady Nancy Reagan, Peter A. Lund, president and chief executive officer, CBS, Inc., and Sanford I. Weill, chairman and chief executive officer, The Travelers Group, Inc., recipients of the CASA Distinguished Service Award.